

මුල් රැස්වීම කොළඹදී

දකුණු ආසියා පරිසර සහ සංවිධානනා වැඩ පිළිවෙල පිළිබඳ සංවිධානනා සුළු පාලන සභාව 27 සිට 29 වැනි දා දකුණු කොළඹ දී රැස්වෙයි. මෙම සහ රැස්වීමේ අනුමැතිය සඳහා පරිසර ව්‍යාපෘති 11 ක් පිළිබඳ යෝජනා ක්‍රම දැනට පත් කෙරෙහි ඇත.

මෙම රැස්වීමට දකුණු ආසියාතික රටවල් කමිසම ආමන්තරණ පැමිණෙයි. එම

රටවල් කමිසම ආයතනික තානා, භූතානා, බංග්ලා දේශය, මාලදිවයින, ඉන්දියාව, ඉරානය, කේප්‍රාය, ජාතිකතානා හා ශ්‍රී ලංකාවයි.

මෙම රැස්වීම සම්බන්ධයෙන් ප්‍රකාශයක් කළ දකුණු ආසියාතික පරිසර සහ සංවිධානනා වැඩ පිළිවෙල පිළිබඳ සංවිධානනා අධ්‍යක්ෂ ආචාර්ය ජෝර්ජ් හේරත්, මේ සංවිධානය දැනට අවුරුද්දකට පෙර පිහිට වූ අවස්ථාවේ සිට මේ දක්වා නොයෙකුත් විකාශනීය යෝජනා ක්‍රම සම්බන්ධයෙන් පරීක්ෂා කර බැලූ බවත් මේ සම්බන්ධ පැවැත්වෙන අධ්‍යයන, වාර්තා සහ සම්මන්ත්‍රණ වලින් හැම රජයක්ම පාහේ හෙමබන් වී සිටින බවත් සඳහන් කෙළේය.

එනිසා අපට දැන් දිවි මනා කරන්නේ ක්‍රියාකාරී වැඩ පිළිවෙලක් යැයි සඳහන් කළ ආචාර්ය හේරත් මෙවැනි ප්‍රායෝගික වැඩ පිළිවෙලක් පැවැත්වීමට සිත යොමු කළේ ඒ නිසා බවත් ප්‍රකාශ කළේය.

Lanka venue for talks on environment

by Carol Aloysius

Sri Lanka will be the venue of a conference on Environment by members of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Program (SACEP) to be held in Colombo from January 27-29.

This will be the first time that the eight-member countries will come together to discuss any issue. Dr. Leslie Herath, Director of SACEP told the 'Observer'.

Shipping who will lead the Sri Lanka delegate is expected to chair the sessions, thereafter.

The meeting of the Governing Council of the ministerial representatives of the member countries expected to attend the conference, will be preceded by a four-day workshop at which a number of important issues related to the subject of environment will be discussed from January 21-25.

The discussions will centre around SACEP activities and the focal areas will include: the use of low cost energy - particularly in the area of agriculture; cheap building materials; endangered valleys and the setting up of a network of monitoring stations in the member countries of South Asia to conduct base level studies and act as referral centres on environment in a given locality.

"We hope to get a mandate from the Governing Council to research more intensively into these areas which have become important issues today. We believe that in solving the problems in these areas, we can improve the overall quality of lives of several millions of people in South Asia", Dr. Herath said.

The Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa is expected to open the inaugural sessions at the BMICH. Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali Minister of Trade and

Gamini wants 1988 named 'Year of Trees' for South Asia

Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, Minister of Lands, Land Development and Mahaveli Development is expected to propose that the year 1988 should be declared the "Year of Trees for South Asia" at today's sessions of the South Asia Environment Co-operative Programme.

According to informed sources, Mr. Dissanayake will propose that projects and programmes should be formulated with the assistance of national and international agencies for intensive reforestation of the region.

Sources indicated that Mr. Dissanayake's objective is to accelerate the pace of reforestation in the region which has been disastrously denuded during the past two centuries. He is also expected to make a strong plea for the development of social forestry.

පරිසර 'හවුල'

මුදල් අමාරුවක

පරිසරය රැක ගැනීමේ වැඩ කටයුතු ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීම පිණිස ශ්‍රී ලංකාව ඇතළු ආසියාතික රටවල් දහයක් එක්වී පිහිටුවා ගෙන ඇති දකුණු ආසියා සහයෝගීතා පරිසර වැඩ සටහන (සකෙප්) බලවත් ආර්ථික දුෂ්කරතාවකට මුහුණ පා සිටී.

මේ ප්‍රශ්නය උද්ගත වී ඇත්තේ මෙම වැඩ සටහනට සම්බන්ධ ඇතැම් සාමාජික රටවලින් පෞරොන්ද්‍ර වී ඇති ආධාර මුදල් තවමත් ලැබී නැති නිසාය. දකුණු ආසියා සහයෝගී

තා පරිසර වැඩ සටහනේ පුළුමන ලෙස මණ්ඩල රැස් වීම මේ දිනවල කොළඹ බණ්ඩාරනායක අනුස්මරණ ජාත්‍යන්තර සම්මන්ත්‍රණ ශාලාවේදී පැවැත්වේ.

මෙම රැස්වීම ඇමතු රට සහභාගි වන ශ්‍රී ලංකා නියෝජිත පිරිසේ සාමාජිකයෙකු සහ මධ්‍යම පරිසර අධිකාරියේ සභාපති වරයාද වන කේ. එම්. ජේ. විජේ දාස මහතා, සකෙප් වැඩ සටහනට මුදල් අතින් මුහුණ පෑමට පිළුම් ඇති දුෂ්කරතා මහසරවෑ ගැනීමට ආධාර කරන ලෙස සාමාජික රටවලින් විශේෂ ඉල්ලීමක් කළේය.

'සකෙප්' වැඩ සටහන සඳහා ශ්‍රී ලංකාව 1982 වර්ෂයේ ව්‍යවස්ථාපිත මධ්‍ය ලී 1,10,000 ක පමණ මුදලක් ආධාර වශයෙන් ලබාදී ඇති අතර, එක්සත් ජාතීන්ගේ පරිසර වැඩ සටහනින් ඩොලර් 4,000 ක්ද, ඇප් ගනිස් ජාතියේ ඩොලර් 1,500 ක් සහ පාකිස්තානයෙන් ඩොලර් තුන්දහසක්ද ආධාර වශයෙන් ලැබී ඇතැයි කියයි.

Dawasa January 20th '83

රටවල් 8 ක රැස්වීමක් කොළඹ

ඇසල පසයේක විසිනි

දකුණු ආසියානු සහයෝගීතා පරිසර වැඩ සටහනේ පාලක සභාවේ ප්‍රථම රැස්වීම මෙම මස 27 හා 28 යන දිනවල කොළඹ බණ්ඩාරනායක අනුස්මරණ ජාත්‍යන්තර සම්මන්ත්‍රණ ශාලාවේදී පැවැත්වීමට කටයුතු යොදා ඇත.

දකුණු ආසියානු රටවල් අටක ඇමති මට්ටමේ නියෝජිත පිරිසක් මෙම රැස්වීමට සහභාගී වෙති.

ශ්‍රී ලංකාව වෙනුවෙන් ගාමිනී දිසානායක, ලලිත් ඇතුළත් මුදල් හා පෙස්ට්ස්

පෙරේරා යන ඇමතිවරුන් මෙම රැස්වීමට සහභාගී වීමට නියමිතය.

අග්‍රාමාත්‍ය ආර්. ප්‍රේමදාස මහතාගේ ප්‍රධානත්වයෙන් පැවැත්වෙන මෙම දකුණු ආසියානු සහයෝගීතා පරිසර වැඩ සටහන පිළිබඳ පාලක සභාවේ ප්‍රථම රැස්වීමේදී ඉදිරි කාලය තුළ ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වන පරිසර යෝජනා ක්‍රම පිළිබඳ සලකා බලනු ඇත.

දකුණු ආසියානු සහයෝගීතා පරිසර වැඩ සටහන මුල්වරට ආරම්භ කරනු ලැබුයේ රටවල් අටක අමාත්‍ය මට්ටමේ නියෝජිතයන්ගේ සහභාගිත්වයෙන් 1981 දී කොළඹ බණ්ඩාරනායක අනුස්මරණ ජාත්‍යන්තර සම්මන්ත්‍රණ ශාලාවේ නිස්ථානය, බංග්ලාදේශය ඉන්දියාව, ඉරානය මාලදිවයින කේපාලය, පකිස්ථානය හා ශ්‍රී ලංකාව මෙයට සහභාගී වූ රටවල් වෙති.

සංවර්ධන යෝජනා ක්‍රම හේතුකොට ගෙන ඇතිවන පරිසර ගැටලු විසඳා ගැනීම සඳහා සහයෝගීතා කටයුතු වර්ධනය කර ගැනීම පරිසර වැඩ සටහනේ ඉලක්කය වන බව පෙරේදා (18) කොළඹ දකුණු ආසියානු සහයෝගීතා පරිසර වැඩ සටහනේ මූලස්ථානයේ පැවති ප්‍රථම පත් සාකච්ඡාවකදී එම වැඩ සටහනේ අධ්‍යක්ෂ ආචාර්ය ලෙස්ලි සේරන් මහතා පැවසීය.

මෙම සාකච්ඡාවට පළාත් පාලන නිවාස හා ඉදිකිරීම් අමාත්‍යාංශයේ අතිරේක ලේකම් කේ. එච්. ජේ. විජේදාස බංග්ලාදේශයේ ආචාර්ය වෛද්‍යී යන මහත්වරුද සහභාගී වූහ.

HOME NEWS

1988 IS YEAR OF THE TREES Redemptive programme a must for South Asia

By Jennifer Henricus

The Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment programme yesterday declared that 1988 will be the Year of Trees for South Asia.

The resolution was passed by the seven-member countries on a recommendation by Lands, Land Development and Mahaveli Development Minister Gamiini Dissanayake.

CO-OPERATIVE EFFORT

The council resolved that an intensive co-operative effort will be launched in the region to prepare for the year.

Addressing the Governing Council earlier in the day Minister Dissanayake said that trees have a bearing on a number of economic needs and growth capacities. Trees are capital assets to economic and social activities and an individual tree is a family asset he said. In a community it is a source of food, fuel, fodder, fertiliser and building material.

He said that the natural resources of forests play a fundamental role in our agrarian economy by protecting watersheds, lessening the runoff rate of rivers ensuring soil fertility, and providing the habitat for both wildlife and the fast depleting genetic plant resources.

Mr. Dissanayake added: "For reasons well known, the forests and trees have been exploited without any consideration to the ill-effects that such exploitation would cause to environment and to our resource base."

RAPE OF FORESTS

"All developing countries in South Asia are well aware of the chaos and calamities caused by the rape of our forests, for whatever reasons, be it the greed of the rich or the need of the poor."

Mr. Dissanayake said that if the programme to restore this lost capital asset is successful the world community too may adopt this model for replication elsewhere.

Mr. Dissanayake added:

"Examples of rehabilitation of forests are many in South Asia and elsewhere. Outside South Asia, I may point to a remarkable exercise that China has completed under a family programme of planting 2,000 million trees last year. Even allowing for lapses in maintaining them it does constitute a phenomenal achievement. This apart, during the 70's, China completed under state and official auspices, what must have been one of the most spectacular tree and forest planting programmes undertaken.

"The village and social

forestry programmes in some states in India are in a different way a spectacular example of what can be achieved. At the same time, in many places in our region the ravages of mountain slopes, as in Nepal and erosion from the coastal areas and the denuding of the forests go on.

"We need in South Asia the launching of a great redemptive programme, as an urgent and vital initiative to save the depleting forest asset and to launch out on rapid reafforestation programmes.

NATIONAL PLANNING

"The programme for us in SACEP will involve national level thinking and planning. As I mentioned, it is not simply environmental, economic and developmental. It will also give opportunities for an involved sharing of our common knowledge and experience in the environmental, economic and social aspects of forestry.

"It should involve exchanging research data, seed material and various other aspects of a successful national, regional and possibly, global project"

During the Council's deliberation yesterday the problem of financing SACEP came up as a recurrent topic, with the countries trying to resolve it in the best way they could.

Development process depends on underpinnings of environment — Premier

(By Christine Nadarajah)

Development and the process of development depended mainly on the underpinnings of the environment which therefore have to be made secure, observed Prime Minister Premadasa yesterday.

Addressing delegates at the first Governing Council meeting of the South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme at the BMICH, Mr. Premadasa said.

"Over six billion people will be added to this world soon; at least 1½ billion will be in the South Asian region, swelling the ranks of the poor".

"This will result in deforestation, erosion, desert, encroachment, pollution, scarcity of water and spread of toxic wastes. Such a world needs sustainable development that can meet at a minimum, human needs", he said.

Explaining the importance of SACEP, Mr. Premadasa said, "The presence of all delegates from this region reflects the recognition of the need to work

together to meet the challenges of environmental management in our part of the world. We are meeting at a time when the resilience of the international economic system is being severely tested".

Mr. Premadasa expressed that it was apt that this meeting was based on the cause of the environment "the means of our sustenance and our further survival".

He stressed the need for co-operation and mutual dependence among nations — especially neighbouring nations in the South Asian region.

"The importance of SACEP lies not only in its being the first step towards co-operative action in this region but the spirit and commitment with which these countries, including some categorised as 'least developed', accepted their financial responsibilities, he added.

He announced the proposition of the government to gift a building site for the establishment of the SACEP headquarters in Colombo.

Describing the links between shelter and the environment as an "intrinsic relationship", Mr. Premadasa urged SACEP to take this into consideration and plan now for the successful launching of his proposal to the UN General Assembly — the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987.

Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali who chaired this meeting said that the problem of environment had been with us probably even before man's existence on earth.

"The problem of ensuring a breathable atmosphere for man, animals and plants is juxtaposed with the problem of development today".

"In our eagerness to develop, it is easy but tragic to forget the effect of this on the environment", he said.

Urging developing countries to

learn from the dangers into which developed nations have fallen, Minister Athulathmudali said, "Don't think the earth's resources are infinite".

It was revealed that during a life span of about 70 years, an average citizen in an industrialised nation utilises 21,000 gallons of petrol, draining the earth of vast amounts of its resources.

"We are now concentrating on practical projects as we have already learnt a great deal of theory on this. The use of firewood as a fuel source, environmental education and the reduction of waste are steps towards the preservation of our environment", he added.

Mr. Athulathmudali also recognised the invaluable assistance to SACEP by the United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP, who has set aside 500,000 for this work.

Director of SACEP, Dr. Leslie Herath explained that the environment was the management and rational utilisation of the resources base in order that development benefits would accrue to the target groups in a sustainable manner over time.

"Before we look outside for what we want, we should learn to look inside for what we have," he said.

Highlighting some of SACEP's achievements during the past few months, Dr. Herath spoke of the Regional Seas Programme for South Asian Seas. This was launched by SACEP and passed when the last UNEP Governing Council met.

"Another project being implemented at grassroots level now, is the control of mosquitoes with non-toxic materials," he said.

He added that the environmental hazards encountered in the methods of mosquito control can now be avoided.

Deputy Executive Director UNEP, Mr. Peter Thatcha spoke.

HOME NEWS

Lalith addresses governing council of SACEP

'Development has been permitted to be hostile to environment'

Trade and Shipping Minister Lalith Athulathmudali yesterday cautioned developing nations in the region about the pitfalls of development.

Addressing the governing council meeting of the South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme, Mr. Athulathmudali, who is the first chairman of the council, said that the industrial nations of the world are smothered in environmental problems and they present a timely warning to our own development.

There is a common saying in Sinhala, that to fall into a pit at night is excusable but to fall into one during the day is unforgivable, he said.

The need for a breathable atmosphere has been felt since the world came into existence. With the fall of the Roman Empire, the dark ages ushered in not only the end of learning and culture but of hygienic living. It is ironic that with the dawn of the industrial revolution hygiene reached its nadir and man's life span shrank to 35 years.

Since then, man has directed every effort to "develop" — to grow economically, to improve his quality of life. It is an effort that has succeeded — and today, in many parts of the world, man lives better and controls more of nature than he ever did. But it is a fact — a regrettable and ironic fact — that for many years development has been permitted to be hostile to environment, to occur at the cost of it, to under-

mine and waste it. Man has often developed whilst paving the road to his own annihilation. A few figures remind us that natural resources are not unlimited.

A Stanford University survey shows that an average citizen in USA uses 21 thousand gallons of petrol and 26 million gallons of water in a life time of 70 years. It is also estimated that industrial progress in the last hundred years has added over 15 per cent to the carbon dioxide content of our air. Scientists say that further significant increases may warm up the globe so that the Arctic and Antarctic ice caps would melt and flood our major cities. A contrary argument is that the increasing smog pollution would form a shield against the sun's rays and start a return to the ice age. All this is controversial. What is not controversial is the fact that we are already beginning to suffer from the ignorance of long term effects of the exploitation of nature.

There is little point in theoretical arguments regarding the habitability of the earth in the year 2000 AD. The point is that something should — and can — be done now. It is easy enough to forget the underlying dangers and yields to present convenience.

At a seminar on "Man and the Future" held at the University of Kansas, the question of atmospheric pollution by the motor car was raised and

an unanimous condemnation made of the invention as a threat to civilisation. At the end of the conference, all the participants got into their cars and drove away in this condemned invention.

It is heartening, then, that we in South Asia have awakened to a threat long overlooked in more developed countries. We have not merely awakened, but have put into effect a concerted programme. It is a matter of pride that countries with relatively low income patterns, yet rich in history and culture, have got together — in a pragmatic manner — to work jointly to preserve the environment without which we cannot survive. Such concerted action is necessary partly because the problem is not a national one and therefore cannot be solved within the boundaries of a single country.

It is also necessary to act together because the majority of the programme's members are as yet undeveloped in many ways — in technology, in expertise, and in financial capability. So, interchange and co-operation among them is essential. The idea of self help which underlies the programme is indeed a laudable one — indicating the increasing stature of developing nations in matters of global dimensions.

At a time when international committees and conferences produce a plethora of reports, guidelines and suggestions which never materialise into concrete proposals, it is

encouraging to see that the governing council of SACEP has already defined a series of practical projects. The pragmatic nature of these projects is clearly apparent when we regard the areas they cover — areas of basic importance to the people of South Asia such as fuelwood conservation, recycling of wastes and organised environmental education.

"We are very grateful to the UNEP for providing the funds to initiate action in selected regions and to conduct a workshop for the endorsement of work plans in these focal points. The UNDP has allocated an initial sum of dollars half million for projects in the 1982/1984 period.

Sri Lanka's commitment to the programme is an indication of my country's desire to establish an increasing degree of co-operation among the nations of South Asia. It indicates our willingness to work actively with our immediate neighbours.

On the members of SACEP has evolved a serious responsibility — and a rare opportunity — to channel and direct the benefits of development whilst avoiding one of its greatest inherent dangers, that of damaging and wasting that very same environment it seeks to utilise for the growth of man. I have no doubt that this programme will achieve all it seeks to do. Whilst assuring my country's continued support and co-operation, I wish this meeting every success."